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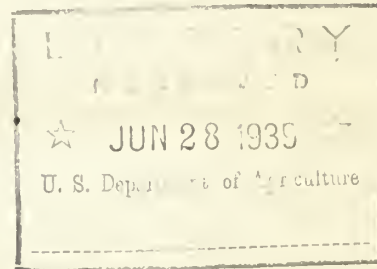
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LET'S VISIT A NATIONAL FOREST
Cherokee--Tennessee

A radio discussion between John Baker, Radio Service, and Elizabeth Pitt, Forest Service, broadcast Friday, June 9, 1939, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour Program, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 104 associate radio stations.

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BAKER:

Well, now, Farm and Home Friends, it's time . . .

(MOTOR HORN OFF)

BAKER:

What's all that racket? Who did that?

PITT: (OFF)

Come on, John . . . it's time for the vacation trip.

BAKER: (LAUGHING)

All right, Betsy, be with you in a minute. We've got to tell folks where we're going, so they can go along with us.

PITT: (FADING IN)

I should say we do. And we've got a grand trip planned for today.

BAKER:

Splendid, Betsy. It'll have to go some to beat last week's. Now in case some of you didn't get in on last week's vacation trip to the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia, I'll tell you what it's all about. Since a lot of us can't get away just any old time to take the fine vacations we'd like to, Betsy Pitt of the Forest Service has suggested that we all pile into an imaginary automobile and take a brief tour of some of our National Forests . . . something like the magic carpet, you know . . . Now, Betsy, where do we go this week?

PITT:

The Cherokee National Forest, and there'll be lots to see . . .

BAKER:

Oh, you going to take us down in the mountains of East Tennessee . . . that suits me fine . . . hop in, and let's get going.

PITT:

I'm all set.

(CAR DOOR CLOSING: MOTOR UP, THEN UNDER)

(over)

BAKER:

Here we are . . . there's the Forest Service sign . . . says "Entering the Cherokee National Forest."

PITT:

This is the Cherokee all right . . . look at the smoky haze over the mountains.

BAKER:

We are in the northern division, aren't we? As I remember it, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park separates the Cherokee Forest into two sections.

PITT:

That's right . . . it runs the full length of the eastern end of the State and the Tennessee part of the park cuts it in two just about the middle.

BAKER:

I suppose Asheville, North Carolina, is over there to the left?

PITT:

And Knoxville, Tennessee, on the right. But they aren't very near. We're right up in the backbone of the mountains.

BAKER:

That's all right with me. I'm getting a kick out of this. Those mountain ranges just seem to roll on and on.

PITT:

That's characteristic of this country . . . range after range of mountains parallel each other. This forest is the watershed for several rivers that have cut deep gorges through the mountains. I wish we had time to see them. They run through fine farming valleys.

BAKER:

I know about the French Broad River, but I believe that's all . . .

PITT:

Well, there's the Pigeon, the Holston, and the Nolichucky and the . . .

BAKER:

The Nolichucky . . . that name makes me think of Tennessee's famous old soldier, John Sevier.

PITT:

You're right in the heart of his country.

But let's speed up a little, John, or we'll never see the southern division of this Forest.

BAKER:

All right . . . I wouldn't want to make the folks miss that.

(MOTOR UP)

PITT:

Slow up, John . . . we want to stop here . . . you can just about see all over the Forest along here. This is Little Frog Mountain.

(MOTOR SLOWS THROUGH DIALOG)

BAKER:

Fine . . . I'm ready to get out and stretch my legs a little.

PITT:

Well, you can stretch all you want to around here. Looks like you're on top of the world, doesn't it? Let's get out.

(CAR STOPS: CAR DOOR OPENS)

BAKER:

Betsy, you didn't tell me, but I'll bet this road is the Kimsey Highway.

PITT:

Right, but how did you know?

BAKER:

I guessed it by the scenery . . . I've heard a lot about the fine views from the Kinsey Highway, and I didn't see how this could be anything else.

PITT:

We hit the Kimsey when we turned off at Reliance . . . it's Tennessee Highway 40.

BAKER:

I imagine we're up about 2500 feet.

PITT:

More than that . . . about 3,000. We are right on the top of Little Frog, and the road runs along the summit of the mountain for several miles.

BAKER:

It looks like the forest primeval all right. This is real wilderness. Look at those big trees down there.

PITT:

They are huge, aren't they. See those poor old dead chestnut trees . . . over here to the right.

BAKER:

The blight got them, didn't it?

PITT:

Yes, got them all. . . and this used to be great chestnut country. The Indians depended on them for food. In fact, the Indian word "Cherokee" means chestnut.

BAKER:

I didn't know that. Say, Betsy, isn't the Cherokee National Forest the place where they have those Prussian wild boars?

PITT:

Yes . . . they are down here.

BAKER:

I thought I remembered reading about the boar hunt down in this country last Fall. There was quite a lot about it in the papers.

PITT:

There've been two open seasons on wild boar in the Cherokee Forest, I believe. Sports men have taken about 50.

BAKER:

Fifty! There must be quite a few of them.

PITT:

They've increased a lot under protection. I imagine there are about 400 here now. You've heard the story about how they got here?

BAKER:

No . . .

PITT:

Some man, I believe he was an Englishman, came down here long before the National Forest was ever thought of, and bought up a lot of land for a hunting lodge. He stocked up with all sorts of game . . . and he brought these Prussian boars over from Europe. After a few years, he died and the property passed into new hands . . .

BAKER:

And I suppose the boars had to shift for themselves . . . (can't imagine anyone wanting to take them in.

PITT:

Some of them must have got along all right . . . at least, there were a few around here when the Cherokee National Forest was established. They've been protected ever since, and recently they had increased to such an extent that the number had to be reduced by hunting.

BAKER:

That's interesting . . . has the rest of the wildlife done that well?

PITT:

Fine . . . Our last game census showed that we have three times as much wildlife in the National Forests now as we had 20 years ago.

BAKER:

Well, I don't know where an animal could find a better home than a nice big National Forest where the hunting is regulated. I should think they'd all move in.

PITT (LAUGHING):

Oh, no, they haven't quite done that. Would you like some figures?

BAKER:

Well . . . if you promise to keep them simple.

PITT:

They'd have to be simple for me to remember them. . . well, 62 percent of all the big game in the United States is still on state and private lands . . . but the National Forests have 32 percent of it. . . in other words the National Forests provide a home for about one-third of all the big game in the country.

BAKER:

Sixty-two and 32 percent . . . well, that's about all of it.

PITT:

All but 6 percent.

BAKER:

Where's that?

PITT:

Four percent is on grazing districts on the public domain, and the other 2 percent is divided up among the Biological Survey, the National Parks and Monuments, and the Indian Reservations.

BAKER:

That's interesting . . . I never knew before just what the distribution was. Say, I wish I could see a deer. Let's stick around and see if one won't come wandering along looking for a handout.

PITT:

That would be great . . . but remember we are just pretending about this . . . and we are due back in the studio at _____, and (FADING) it's that now

(MOTOR UP: MOTOR HORN--BOARD FADE)

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BAKER:

And here we are, Farm and Home Friends, back in the studio in Washington right on time. You've been listening to an imaginary visit to the Cherokee National Forest in Tennessee. It gave you a brief glimpse of what's being done in our National Forests to conserve wildlife resources. Next Friday we will visit the Ozark National Forest in Arkansas, and we hope you will go along with us.

